

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Kindly amend the claims, without prejudice, without admission, without surrender of subject matter, and without any intention of creating any estoppel as to equivalents, as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A conveyor idler including a drum having an outer surface and an inner surface, a shaft about which the drum can rotate in a forward direction, a locking mechanism for preventing the drum from rotating in a reverse direction but which locking mechanism permits rotation of the drum in the forward direction, the locking mechanism having ~~at least one~~ plurality of wedging ~~surface-surfaces~~ fixed directly or indirectly to the drum, and a plurality of locking ~~member-members~~ interposed between the wedging ~~surface-surfaces~~ and the shaft, the plurality of locking ~~member-members~~ being rotatable about the shaft when the drum rotates in the forward direction, but when an attempt is made to rotate the drum in the reverse direction the plurality of locking ~~member-members~~ becomes releasably wedged between the wedging ~~surfaee~~ surfaces and the shaft, or a surface fixed to the shaft, thereby preventing the drum from rotating in the reverse direction wherein the plurality of locking members are located in a locking housing, the locking housing being located between the drum and the shaft, the locking housing having circumferentially spaced cages for the locking members to ensure the circumferential spacing between the locking members does not vary.

Claims 2 – 4 (Canceled)

5. (Original) The conveyor idler of claim 4 wherein each locking member is rotatably located within its cage.

6. (Original) The conveyor idler of claim 4 wherein each locking member is radially movable within its cage.

7. (Original) The conveyor idler of claim 4 wherein the locking housing consists of two axially spaced end members, with the cages being formed between the end members and between pairs of spaced axially extending walls located between the end members.

8. (Original) The conveyor idler of claim 7 wherein the cages extend radially outwardly beyond the circumference of the end members.

9. (Original) The conveyor idler of claim 7 including a reinforcing web extending between the end members.

10. (Original) The conveyor idler of claim 1 wherein the wedging surface includes a ramp.

11. (Previously Presented) The conveyor idler of claim 1 wherein the wedging surface forms part of, or is fixed to, an end cap or closure of the drum, the end cap or closure being fixed to the drum.

12. (Original) The conveyor idler of claim 11 wherein the wedging surface is located within a locking housing receptacle which is fixed to the end cap.

13. (Original) The conveyor idler of claim 12 wherein the locking housing receptacle includes a plurality of circumferentially spaced slots which engage a plurality of radially extending webs in the end cap thereby to fix the locking housing receptacle to the end cap.

14. (Previously Presented) The conveyor idler of claim 1 wherein the wedging surface is located within a locking housing receptacle which is fixed to the inner surface of the drum.

15. (Original) The conveyor idler of claim 1 wherein the locking member is a ball bearing or roller bearing.

16. (Currently Amended) A locking mechanism for a conveyor idler for releasably locking a drum of the conveyor idler from rotating about a shaft in a reverse direction but which permits rotation of the drum in a forward direction about the shaft, the locking mechanism including a connecting means connecting a plurality of circumferentially spaced locking members together which locking members are in use located between wedging surfaces fixed to the drum so that in use when an attempt is made to rotate the drum in the reverse direction, The locking mechanism of claim 1 wherein the locking members will simultaneously become releasably wedged between the shaft and the wedging surfaces thereby preventing the drum from being rotated in the reverse direction.

Claims 17 - 28 (Canceled)